

- 105 the still morning air. Everywhere the women are busy,
512 carrying water and wood, and preparing the simple meal.
[515] And now we see the men come out, and start for the river.
Some are followed by their children; some are even carrying
those too small to walk. They have reached the water's
edge. Off drop their blankets, and with a plunge and a
shivering *ah-h-h* they dash into the icy waters. Winter and
[147] summer, storm or shine, this was their daily custom. They
said it made them tough and healthy, and enabled them to
endure the bitter cold while hunting on the bare bleak
[264] prairie. By the time they have returned to the lodges, the
[252] women have prepared the early meal. A dish of boiled
meat—some three or four pounds—is set before each
[262] man; the children are served as much as they can eat, and
the wives take the rest. The horses are now seen coming
in, hundreds and thousands of them, driven by boys and
[224] young men who started out after them at daylight. If
[462] buffalo are close at hand, and it has been decided to make
a run, each hunter catches his favorite buffalo horse, and
they all start out together; they are followed by women, on
the travois or pack horses, who will do most of the butchering,
and transport the meat and hides to camp. If there is no
[224] band of buffalo near by, they go off, singly or by twos and
threes, to still-hunt scattering buffalo, or deer, or elk, or
[462] such other game as may be found. The women remaining
in camp are not idle. All day long they tan robes, dry
meat, sew moccasins, and perform a thousand and one other
[302] tasks. The young men who have stayed at home carefully
comb and braid their hair, paint their faces, and, if the
● [832] weather is pleasant, ride or walk around the camp so that
the young women may look at them and see how pretty they
are.
- 514 Feasting began early in the morning, and will be carried
105 on far into the night. A man who gives a feast has his
512 wives cook the choicest food they have, and when all is

THE BLACKFEET

[ca. 1850]

627 might be ended by a payment of horses to the family of the
682 deceased. Thus it was possible for a wealthy man literally to
get away with murder, although he would not enhance his popularity by doing so.

602 Frequent changes in band allegiance brought together in one
582 residential community people without blood relationship closer
than that of second cousins. Marriage between such persons was
permitted. In fact, the fathers and mothers of several of my
older Blackfoot informants were members of the same band at
the time of their marriages.

831 Young men enjoyed remarkable freedom in their sexual life.
They accosted girls while they were alone gathering wood or
water on the outskirts of camp. They bragged of their conquests,
particularly if they had had an affair with a married woman.
836 Chastity before marriage was more an ideal than a reality for
many girls. Yet a girl who earned a reputation for being too
free with her favors might have to be satisfied with marrying a
poor boy whose future prospects were equally poor.

832 Faint-hearted lovers, or more aggressive ones whose advances
789 were repulsed by the girls of their choice, sometimes employed
love medicines to bring them success in their amorous endeavors.
These were secret formulae concocted by specialists for a fee.
Because the Cree Indians were famous for these medicines, the
Blackfeet referred to love medicine as "Cree Medicine." There
were many varieties. One such medicine called for making two
little birch bark images, one representing a man and the other a
woman. A stick was dipped in the liquid medicine, then touched
to the hearts of the male and female figures. This magic was
certain to make the girl long for the company of her as yet
unsuccessful lover. So powerful were love medicines reputed to
be that resistance to them was considered useless.

584 Fathers and mothers were ambitious for their daughters to
marry well. It was not uncommon for the father of a little girl
to tell a successful warrior, "When my daughter is old enough,
she will be your wife." The marriage might not take place for
a decade. Elk-Hollering-in-the-Water told me she was promised

836 the only reason for the limited participation: "There are a lot of women on
554 this reserve who could put up a Sun Lodge, but don't want to." While their
796 virtue might be unassailable, she was convinced that they either could not
837 muster enough wealth, or did not care to meet the considerable demands
[778] for buying the *natoas* bundle,¹⁷⁶ putting up the lodge and staging a give-
[184] away.

182 The rewards of chastity unsupported by property are limited indeed. In
431 1939, the Sun Lodge vower only gave two horses away. The transferrer
796 asked by an interested bystander how he "had come out," laughed and
425 answered, "I never did as badly as this time." The crowd, well-aware that
there was to be no give-away, showed little interest in the proceedings.

● [832] When the great moment arrived, the sun pole could barely be raised; most
[535] of the men preferred to dance the Owl Dance, that aid to flirtation and liai-
[575] son. But the conspicuous display at the transfer of Horn Society member-
ships two days earlier had drawn a large and expectant company.

Bundles¹⁷⁷

575 The costs, limited memberships available, and unappealing demands of
424 such a society as the Crazy Dogs were clearly deterrents to participation,
184 but nevertheless an impressive proportion of the adult male population
bought into the cheaper (younger) organizations, and for special reasons
422 into the Horns. The ownership of medicine pipes and beaver bundles is
778 much more restricted. Only thirty, or less than one-tenth of the group
184 sampled, bought pipes at all:

25 bought 1 pipe
1 bought 2 pipes
2 bought 3 pipes
2 bought 4 pipes

Only six have bought beaver bundles.¹⁷⁸

3 bought 1 bundle
3 bought 2 bundles

Of the first group, one had also purchased a medicine pipe; of the second, one had purchased four.

¹⁷⁶ It is possible to vow the Sun Lodge without buying the *natoas* bundle. Cf. Wissler, *Blackfoot Sun Dance*, pp. 241, 246.

¹⁷⁷ Many other types than those discussed here were in circulation. For full descriptions, see Wissler, *Blackfoot Bundles*, passim.

¹⁷⁸ Wissler (*Blackfoot Bundles*, p. 169), writes in 1912: "At present beaver bundles are to be found among the divisions except the Blood, among whom they have not been particularly popular for a long time."

1913.]

Wissler, *Blackfoot Societies*.

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saying, "Ha-a-e Ha-a-e." Finally, the horse and rider are led in among the dancers and his new name is announced. 535

Sometimes the dance is given in the evening but then the dancers do not dress in their best clothes. Most of the songs mock the enemy, as in the one about the Assiniboine chief White-dog: "White-dog, at last had to cry," or "Why is it that White-dog cried," meaning, he was so brave, but the Blackfoot made him cry when he knew he was to die. 727 [553] [533]

THE KISSING DANCE.

In winter evenings the kissing dance is held. There is no feast but the dancers are served with tea. Three or four drums are used in the dance. The men and women dance in place on opposite sides of the tipi, facing each other. Some of the women choose partners among the men; they dance up to each other, throwing kisses. When they are close together a blanket is thrown over their heads. Under the cover the two kiss each other. They dance between the two rows of men and women. The blanket is given to the woman as a fee for choosing the man. Sometimes other gifts are added. There are no certain members for this dance, anyone may join. It is very seldom that a vow is made to give this dance as it has more of a social than a ceremonial nature. It is said to have come from the Assiniboine, but is sometimes called the Cree dance. [272] [173] [177]

THE TEA DANCE.

Similar to the kissing dance and also coming from the Assiniboine is the tea dance, a tea-drinking contest. Anyone who so wishes may join. There is no leader. The dancers divide into two bodies, both men and women may be on the same side. Each side gives the members of the other a lot of tea to drink, the idea being to see who can drink more without falling sick. If a person does not wish to drink any more tea he may pay the person who made it, a blanket, or sometimes even a horse, and thus be excused from drinking. Sometimes if one has made another ill from drinking the tea, a fee is paid. 536 272 [177] [681]

Some men have the power to drain a pail of tea without spilling or drinking it, but by simply covering it with a cloth and singing. When the cloth is removed the pail is empty. Sometimes, one will say to another, "I have the power to empty this pot of tea in your stomach without your knowledge." Occasionally, lovers drop a ring in the cup when passing tea to each other. There is no feast and the dance is generally held in the evening sometimes [769] [132] ●

21: Hungry Wolf F-4,5 (ca. 1972) 1977
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

[Horns Society Transfer Ceremony, 1891]

woman appeared and stood about 50 yards to the East of them, holding in her hands a bowl of water. Two of the dancers got up and slowly walked towards her, as before stooping low, one behind the other. The leading man kissed her, in the same solemn fashion as before, received from her the water, some of which he drank and after passing the bowl to his companion, who had in the meantime also kissed the squaw, he handed her a small bundle of clothing. The other man now finished drinking and deposited the empty bowl upside down upon the ground at the feet of the woman. They now returned, as they came, to their places and the squaw picked up the bowl and went home. Two other women brought water for the thirsty and the same performance was gone through. In one case three men came out instead of two. These squaws were the wives of late members of the Society, and considered that they were doing a very sacred duty in allowing

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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 20-B]

[p. 207-A]

21: Hungry Wolf F-4,5 (ca. 1972) 1977
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

[Horns Society Transfer Ceremony, 1891]

themselves to be publicly kissed. In fact there was not a smile upon the face of any of the actors, nothing to suggest anything other than a religious duty, but I could not restrain a smile as I saw Spotted Bull, who is a notorious wag, solemnly kissing the wife of Mas-tak-ath who is one of the most handsome women in the tribe. White Calf stood behind two men and a woman, facing the East, and shouted aloud a prayer. They then faced the South, he prayed again; changing to the West again, he called out a prayer and finally repeating with faces to the North they all sat down.

A group of women and old people, not members of the Society, were sitting near the circle of dancers, for the purpose of having prayers shouted over them. The dancers stood close to these sitting people and facing them always so that they had to move in a circle themselves in facing the 4 different directions. This performance was repeated by two other parties of four persons each. Next a dance was indulged in. The main party danced in a circle around those sitting on the ground, being led by one with the arrow in his war bonnet. The other three with large head-dresses danced outside of the rest and circled in the opposite direction, and against the Sun. The speed was increased to a fast hop and then the leader stopped suddenly and without turning hopped backwards 5 or 6 times for perhaps half of the circle, during which they reversed as often as they halted. After a brief pause the dance was repeated and, in all, it was done 4 times; then all sat down. Running Wolf's crook was carried over to some old men who sat about 50 yards to the north of the party; one of these took Running Wolf's crook and counted 4 coups. The drummers beat an applause or response after each coup and the crook was carried back to its owner. The same was done for the second leader.

After a rather extended rest, they all got up and the closing dance was performed. "Little Shield," the wearer of the war bonnet with the arrow in it, not being an active man, handed his

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 210-A]

[P. 208-B]

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